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Race, space and architecture: towards and open-access curriculum

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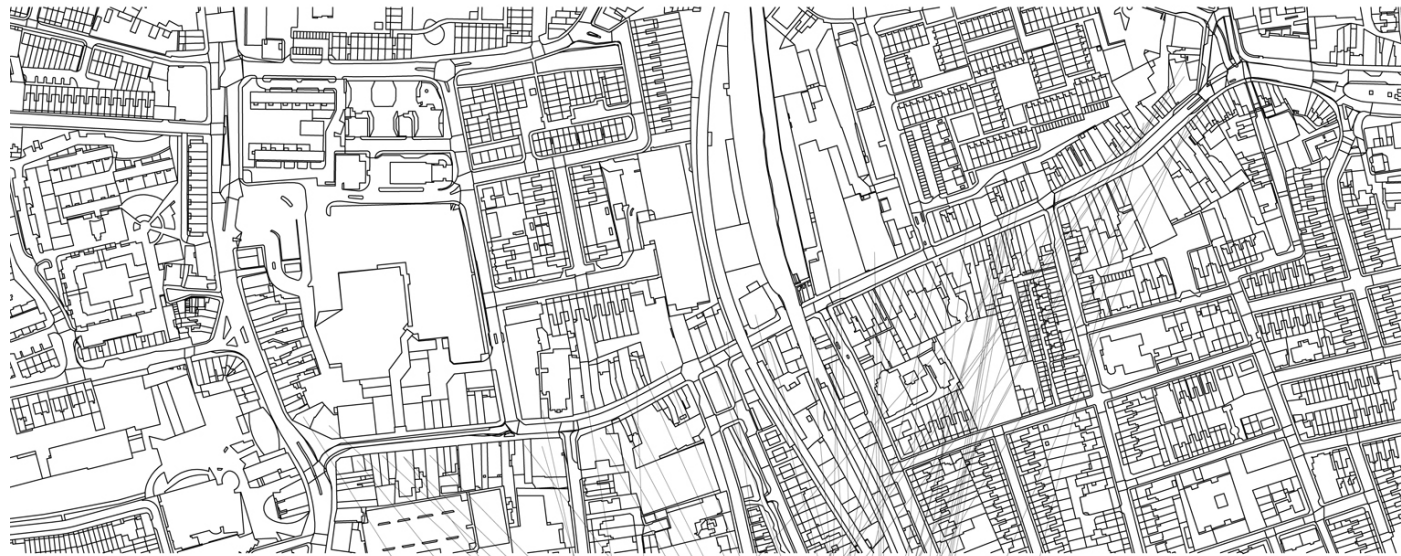
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Race, Space and Architecture

Towards an Open-Access Curriculum

**Huda Tayob & Suzanne Hall
June 2019**



Ordinary Streets Project 2012
Drawn by Sadiq Toffa

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Department of
Sociology

This is designed as an open-access curriculum, to be freely used, interpreted and adapted. It is the first stage publication to be followed by an open-access website. This project would not have been possible without the generous contributions yielded by the Race, Space and Architecture workshop as well as the contributions of those who have shared their images.

Should you wish to contact us about the curriculum, please email Huda Tayob (htayob@uj.ac.za) or Suzi Hall (s.m.hall@lse.ac.uk).



[The Georgia Negro] City and Rural Population, 1890
W.E.B. Du Bois

Race, Space and Architecture:

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June 2019

A position

This project asks what a curriculum on space-making and race-making might look like with architecture and the designed world as a key reference point. We engage with how understandings of race-making might be extended through imagined and constructed forms of architecture. We arrived at this project through our mutual frustrations of being educated in a discipline of architecture in which constitutions of 'race' are largely omitted, despite its omnipresence. It would be impossible to grow up in South Africa, as we both did, and not experience the impacts of the built political economy of racial segregation. Buildings, highways, suburbs and townships are constitutive of how individuals become positioned in a vast spectre of racial segregation, tangible in the shape of space and the materiality of concrete and corrugated iron. In this curriculum architecture is a way of imagining, building and validating a world. Architecture is bricks and mortar; the interior arrangements of culture in the positioning of thresholds, openings and objects; and the accumulation of these built forms and practices into social forms of association and dis-association. Architecture is also professionalised, existing as a highly mediated form of knowledge-making that interacts with speculators, planning authorities and local communities for its pay checks, compliance and legitimisation. It lays claim to the physical and experimental possibilities of imagining that is frequently communicated through the visual formats of drawings, models, exhibitions and buildings.

At the project's core is an understanding of racialisation as a process of violent displacement - of person, of land, of future - simultaneously with an emplacement through citizenship status, territory, built objects and knowledge forms. Our curriculum recognises a lineage of racialised hierarchies endemic to capitalist systems and cultural life that extend from colonialism to coloniality, slavery to incarceration, liberalism to subordination, and sovereignty to populism. We question both the subject of 'race' and the subject of architecture: how individuals are rendered as labourer, domestic worker, or immigrant in legal and cultural terms, with how the architectures of camp, compound and detention centre solidify the symbolic and lived forms of these positions. Yet within, around and beyond these structures of racial capital, is the substance of transgression. It conveys how struggles for social justice are galvanised through space in the convening powers of the margins, and in the arrangements of material and practices that together stake a place. Dance halls, streets, and spiritual interiors are counter architectures in which different circuits of connection, processes of validation and alternative ways of inhabiting the world are established.

We engage with three key questions

- **What are the spatial contours of capitalism that produce racial hierarchy and injustice?**
- **What are the inventive repertoires of refusal, resistance and re-making that are neither reduced to nor exhausted by racial capitalism, and how are they spatialised?**
- **How is 'race' configured differently across space, and how can a more expansive understanding of entangled world space broaden our imagination for teaching and learning?**

A Methodological Orientation

If race-making is configured in processes of displacement and emplacement, then part of the work of this curriculum must extend to methods that stretch across the unspectacular spatial practices necessitated by living with very little, to the extreme spatialities of banishment and punishment. Which vocabularies are able to incorporate the vast extent of dehumanisation across the spaces of body, nation and globe, and the reconstitutions of a humanity that speaks to a shared planetary future? What counter-mappings might allow us to push for wider and more varied forms of knowledge and understanding? We begin first, to think through the frames that allow us to identify specific process of power and racialisation and the spaces and built forms in and through which they are sustained and transgressed. Within each frame we collect a range of references in the forms of film, drawings and text, to place together the varied modes of knowing about race-making and space-making. Some of these sources and inspirations come from the discipline of architecture, many do not. This is an important part of unsettling the disciplinary conventions of what architecture is, how it can be taught, and how architecture's on the ground impacts and future possibilities can be understood.

Collecting and selecting film, fiction, visualisations, core texts and more readings

Each frame is populated with different forms and modes of expression. We are mindful of the rich contributions of film, fiction and visualisation to help us see differently, and a selection – by no means definitive – comes upfront as a reference to the richly creative ways in which 'race', space and architecture is present in poetry, stories, and moving images. This is followed by a grouping of projects and images that help to reveal the textures and formal dimensions of race-making as it unfolds in space and architecture. Some of the links to projects are about the rampant dispossession of people from spaces and buildings in which they form lives and livelihoods. The links lead you to insights about activism, and how protest emerges and is sustained in and through buildings and spaces. Other links will take you sites about different ways of imagining human connection and disconnection, providing a vocabulary of different ways of thinking, learning and acting.

None of our frames or lists are in any way definitive, complete or precise. They are collections and selections of material that are intentionally varied in geography, discipline and form, and they are intended to provide an engaging and varied entry point into ways of thinking 'race', space and architecture. In this way we hope to reconstitute the idea of an archive as a messy, incomplete collection and selection of materials, that is enriched by a variety of forms of knowledge as much as by a collage of reference points drawn across the planet.

Sharing a curriculum

We see this curriculum is in its current form as a first phase, circulated as a PDF without a pay wall, for wide distribution and open use. Please feel free to use and adapt the material in ways that might enrich your teaching, learning or architectural practice. The second phase of sharing a curriculum extends to getting feedback from you, allowing us to expand our material in ways that we can't as yet anticipate. Finally, we hope to place content on line, and to provide as much freely available material as possible. This will involve asking people to share material with us that is not subject to a variety of copyright restrictions. We hope to upload pre-edited published writings, and images shared with authors' permissions.

Six Frames

This curriculum is arranged in six frames each capturing ongoing process of racial ordering that is spatial and material. While these frames both overlap and omit, each frame points to a particular arrangement of political and economic power, everyday practices and spatial typologies. In each frame, we place different geographies side by side, connect processes ranging from harbouring to off-shoring, and explore relations between apparently dissimilar architectures. Ours is a vocabulary of hostels, homes, suburbs, ghettos, villages, gated communities, camps, prisons and the parks; a plethora of intimate and world orders in which 'race' and space coalesce.

• Centralising

The design of centrality - of city centres, public squares, museums, neighbourhood precincts and tourist zones – is invested in the question of value; what matters and by extension, who matters. Constitutions of 'authenticity' are rendered in the ethos and aesthetics of centralising and its modalities of 'whiteness', as well as spatial forms of ethno-nationalisms.

• Circulating

Moving or having to be on the move speaks to the immense efforts and ingenuities required to undertake a journey and the heightening of borders that hinder these flows. In circulating, 'race' is destabilised and remade in markets, music halls and spiritual spaces, leading to new spatial displacements and solidarities.

• Domesticating

Domesticating occurs through the dispossession of and entitling to land. Through the control and disciplining of home and the gendering of labour, inequalities are secured in forms of suburbanising, compounding and ghettoising, and recomposed in the makeshift modes of squatting.

• Extracting

The stripping out of assets dislocates humanity, goods and responsibilities to an 'elsewhere', through the legal and material constitution of special zones such as mines, harbours and dumping sites. In this process, labour is also dislocated by being rendered less visible and without rights, increasingly apparent in new mutations of casualised economies.

• Immobilising

The structure, technologies and rhetorical performance of the state is central to illegalising and limiting the mobility of racialised and classed subjects. The extreme violation of rights proliferates in partitions and borders but is also evident in the banality of waiting rooms and processing offices.

• Incarcerating

Incarcerating is the surveillance and punishment of racialised, ethnicised and religious 'others'. Spatial typologies extend from detention camps to data capture technologies, to stop and search on street sidewalks.

Centralising

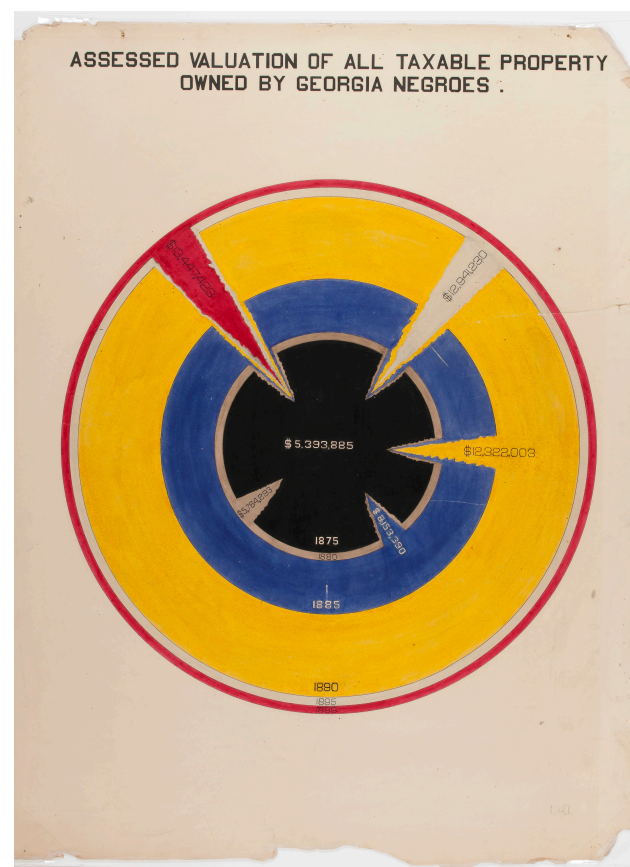
Accumulating, dispossessing, gentrifying, whitening, ethnicising, arting, theming, consuming centres, margins, creative precincts, tourisms, zones, frontiers, uptowns, downtowns

Architecture and planning are deeply imbricated in the design of centrality: of city centres, public squares, museums, urban precincts and tourist zones that make up a global validation of centres and invalidation of margins. These practices of rendering places as central are part of a political economy of design and evaluation that are invested in questions of not only what matters, but by extension, who matters. Centres are imagined, marketed and surveilled for a particular kind of citizen and associated behaviours of consumption. While often unspoken, the actively designed process of centralising can be imbued in racial hierarchy as well as the production of ethno-nationalisms.

Brenda Yeoh and Lily Kong show us the constructing of nationhood through urban Singapore, while Hiba Bou Akar details the constant reference to war and ethnic segregation in the ongoing making of Beirut. Centrality and its assumption of value are also coded into the highly professionalised and elite circuits of planning and architecture, and an ethos and aesthetic of 'whiteness' which secures racial privilege as much as dispossession (Kobayashi and Peake). This occurs in the redevelopment of a margin to make it more like a centre as in Redfern in Sydney (Shaw) or in the selling of social housing, which has a direct implication for public space and urban multiculturalism in London (Jackson). Jazeel and Roy further show us that in theorising the urban, questions from 'racial banishment' to cosmopolitanism are similarly limited to western theoretical commitments and argue for more expansive critical reference points. This frame of centralising brings to the fore the political economy of 'whiteness' and ethno-nationalism, questioning its mechanisms of production along with how it is challenged in everyday life.



Sophiatown, 1955 by Jurgen Schadeberg
www.jurgenschadeberg.com



ca. 1900
W.E.B. Du Bois

Film/ Fiction/ Visualisations

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Chinese Gate at the entrance to Chinatown, Kuala Lumpur. 2007
Yat Ming Loo



KL Chinese Cemetery, Kuala Lumpur. 2006
Yat Ming Loo

More reading

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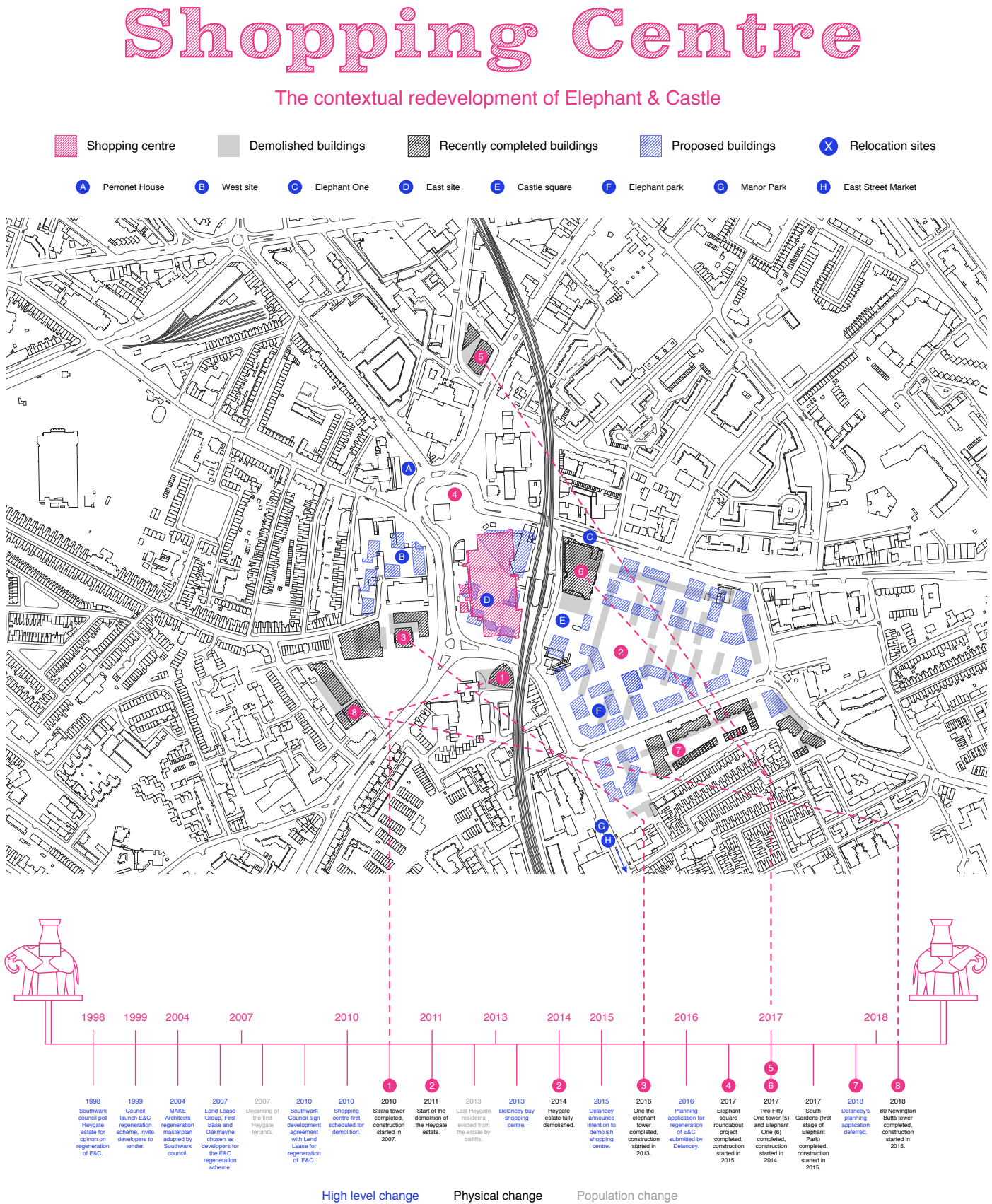
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Projects

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<https://latinelephant.org/>

Matsipa, Mpho [curator and project leader]: African Mobilities
<http://africanmobilities.org/>



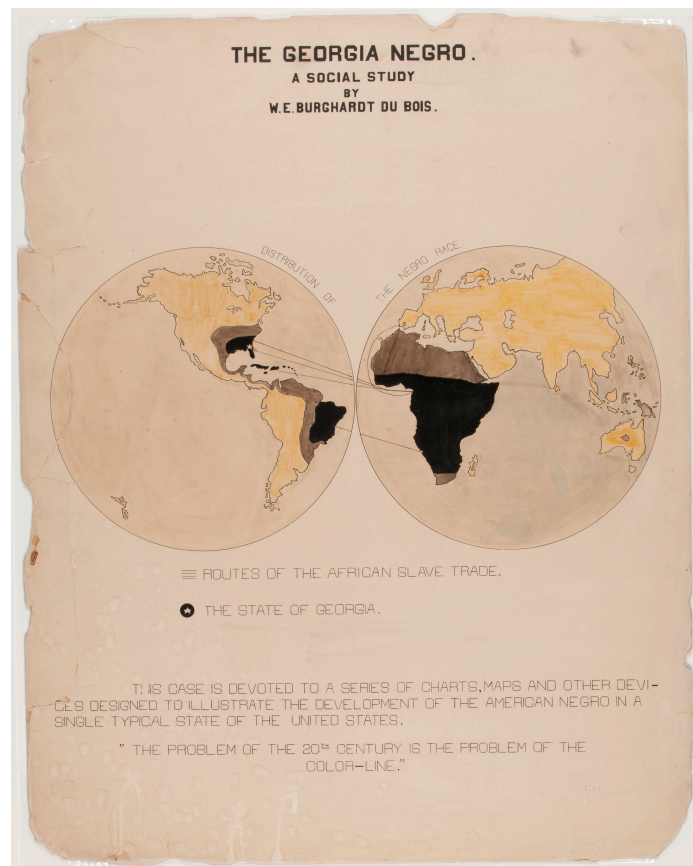
The Ongoing Redevelopment of the Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre, 2018.
Drawn by Joshua Mallins, Socio Economic Value at the Elephant and Castle Shopping Centre

Circulating

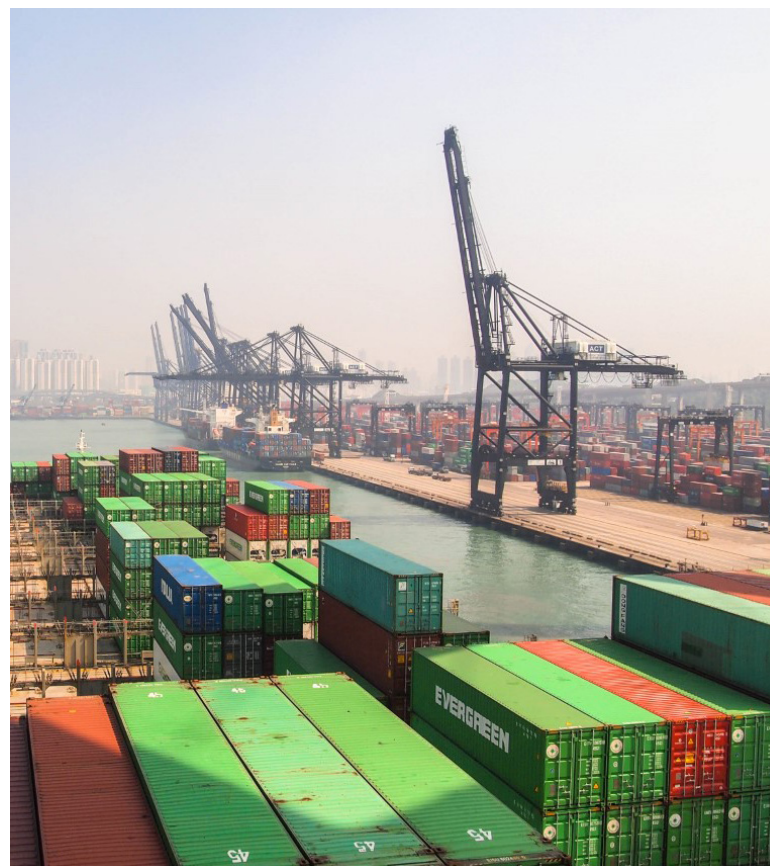
Migrating, moving, transporting, trading, intersecting, crossing, sharing, bordering, queering
Railways, markets, borders, music halls, spiritual spaces, solidarities

Circulating, whether enforced or intended, evokes a multiplicity of spaces, identities and capital flows. It points to spatial entanglements across vast geographies in the service of extractive (colonial) capitalism, and in the form of solidarities and practices of resistance. It speaks of the effort and ingenuity involved in undertaking a journey and the heightening of borders and controls that hinder and impede this movement. In this multiplicity, race is at times destabilised, reinforced and re-imagined.

Containers, ports, borders and passports are associated with new practices of empire building, and colonial and neo-colonial violence acted out on racialised bodies. Charmaine Chua looks into the history of container design as the quintessential unit of global shipping, post cold-war imperialism and consumerism, while Shailja Patel performs her personal waves of forced migration. These forms of circulation coincide with forms of resistance: of inventive negotiations of African entrepreneurs (Simone); of a borderless imagination of Africa (Chimurenga Chronic), of anti-racism of club life in 1960s and 1970s Britain (Gilroy); and of queer performativity in dancehall and bounce in the post-plantation societies of Kingston and New Orleans. The films *Touki Bouki*, and *Milles Soleils* offer a filmic and visual engagement with the surreal, naturalistic and part-fiction, together suggestive of alternative archives. In circulating, the hardships and immense effort of journeys involving multiple displacements do not exclude collective affirmation and solidarity.



1900
W.E.B. Du Bois



Port of Long Beach Terminal. 2014
Charmaine Chua

Film/ Fiction/ Visualisations

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Block the Boat, LA coalition delay the Israeli-owned Zim shipping line operating, shortly after Operation Protective Edge lay siege to Gaza. 2014. Charmaine Chua

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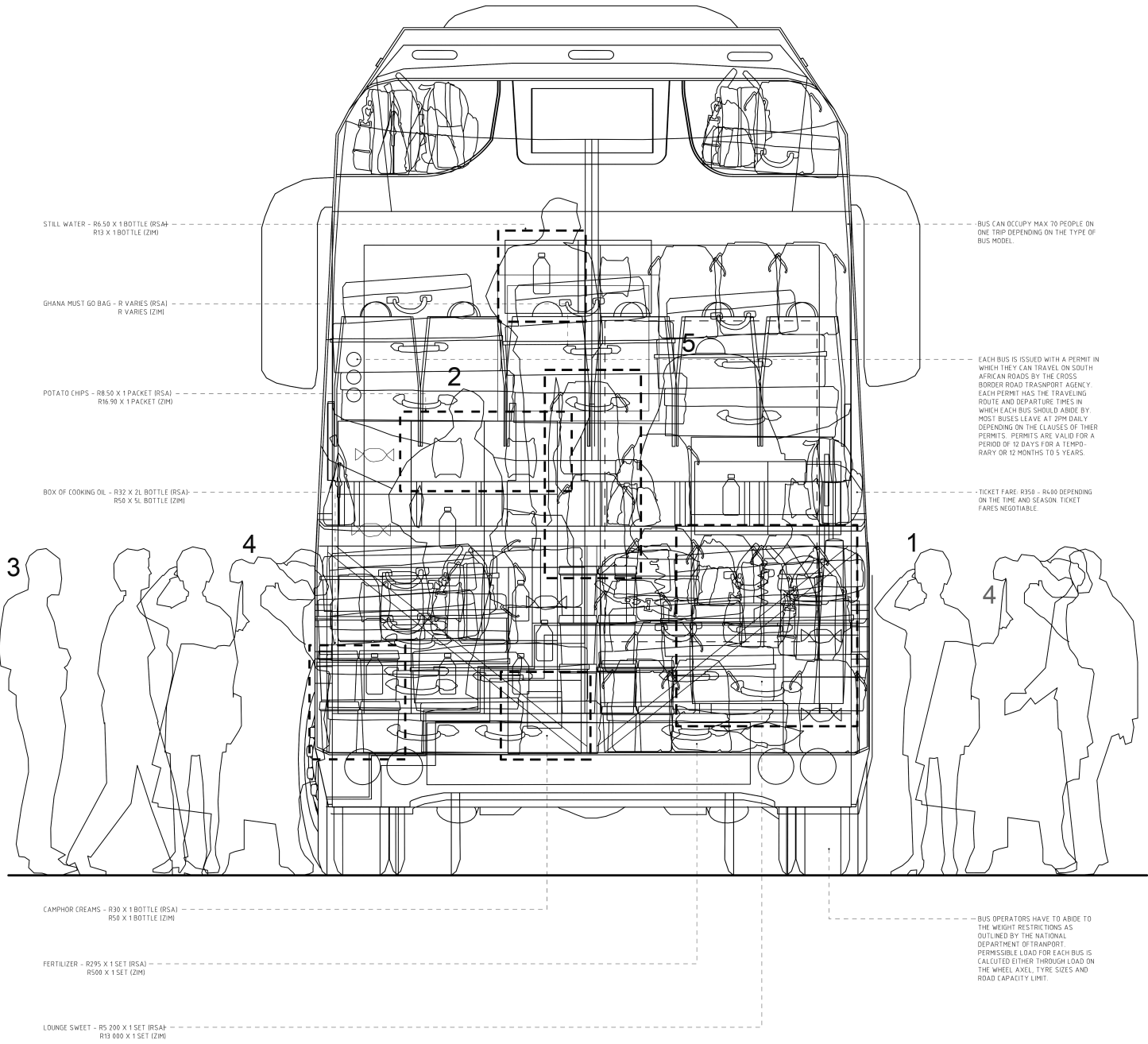
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Unit 14, Graduate School of Architecture UJ: www.gsaunit14.com

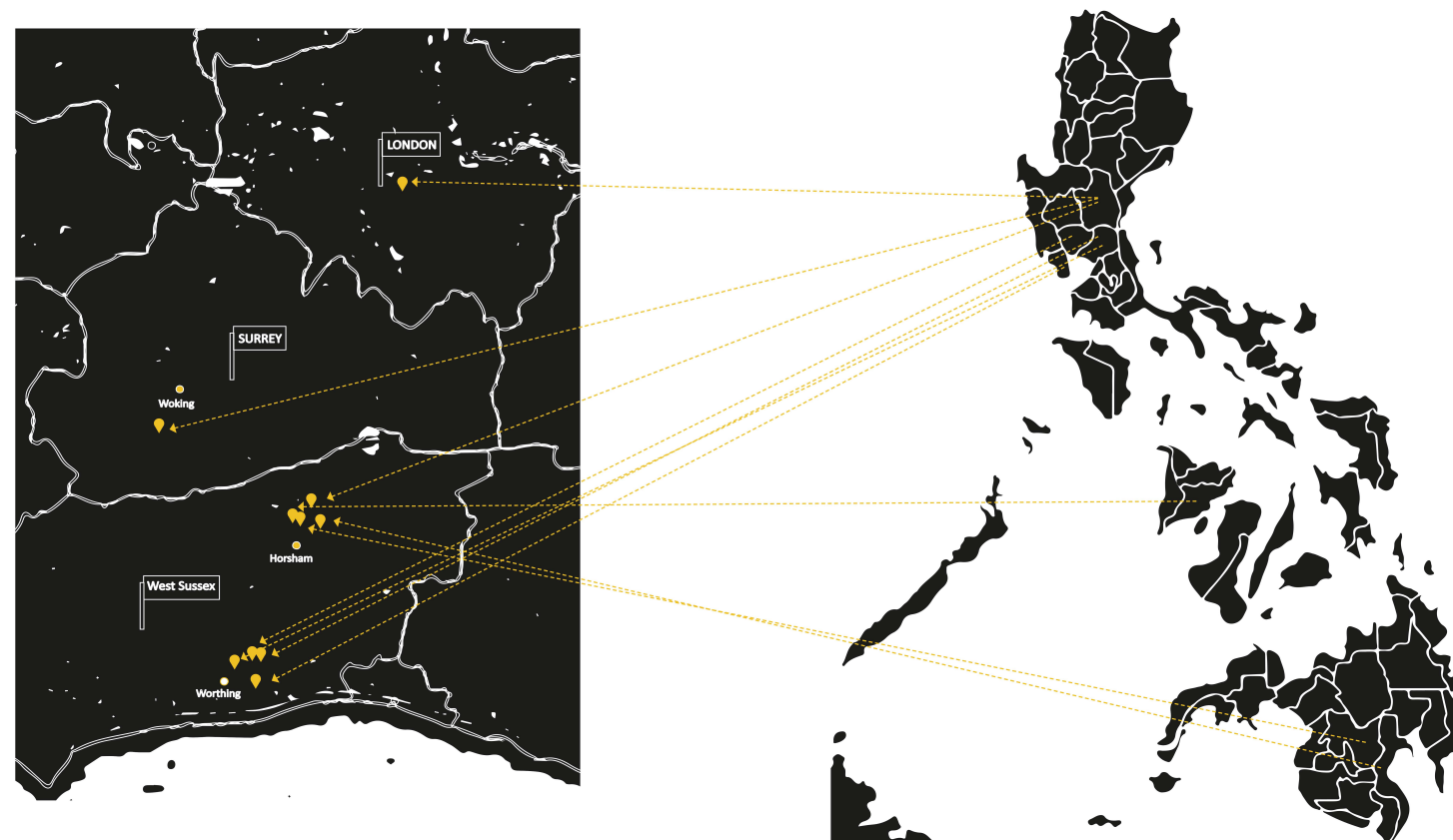


Domesticating

Suburbanising, compounding, home-making, ghettoising, squatting, gendering, red-lining
Suburban house, hostel, ghetto, favela, gated-enclave, bantustan, village.

The experiences and implications of race-making are profoundly shaped by the places where people live, their forms of housing, and their home-making practices. Central to these practices is the dispossession of land and gendered forms of control: disciplining enforced and enabled through housing and homes. These are recomposed and remade in modes of squatting and the homeplace (hooks) as spaces not reducible to imposed hardships.

Domesticating as gendered, classed and racialized, is reproduced across scales ranging from the global displacement of domestic workers (Sembene; Parrenas), to urban master planning resulting in the enclosing of fortified neighbourhoods (Caldeira), to the construction of suburbs as white spaces (Harris) and the demarcation within houses of those serving from those served. These spatial typologies include labour hostels as sites for the exploitation of black labour (Ramphele), to new migrant detention centres in Europe and the renewed ghettoising of those deemed 'other' (Anyango Grunewald and Taivassalo). These typologies are underpinned by systemic colonial and racial capitalism. While housing discrimination was made illegal in the USA in 1948, Diane Harris argues that it remains a ubiquitous practice through the Federal Housing Administration's policy of "minority containment" and practices of red-lining. Domesticating is therefore necessarily sited within larger processes of land expropriation, the economies of home and practices of displacement across time. Yet this category also recognises that despite imposed structures of racial capital, complex realities are negotiated through enduring forms of intimacy and sustenance (hooks; Ba).



Mapping Filipino Migrants in the UK and their homes in the Phillipines. 2019
 Maria Patricia Castelo

Film/ fiction/ Visualisations

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Core texts

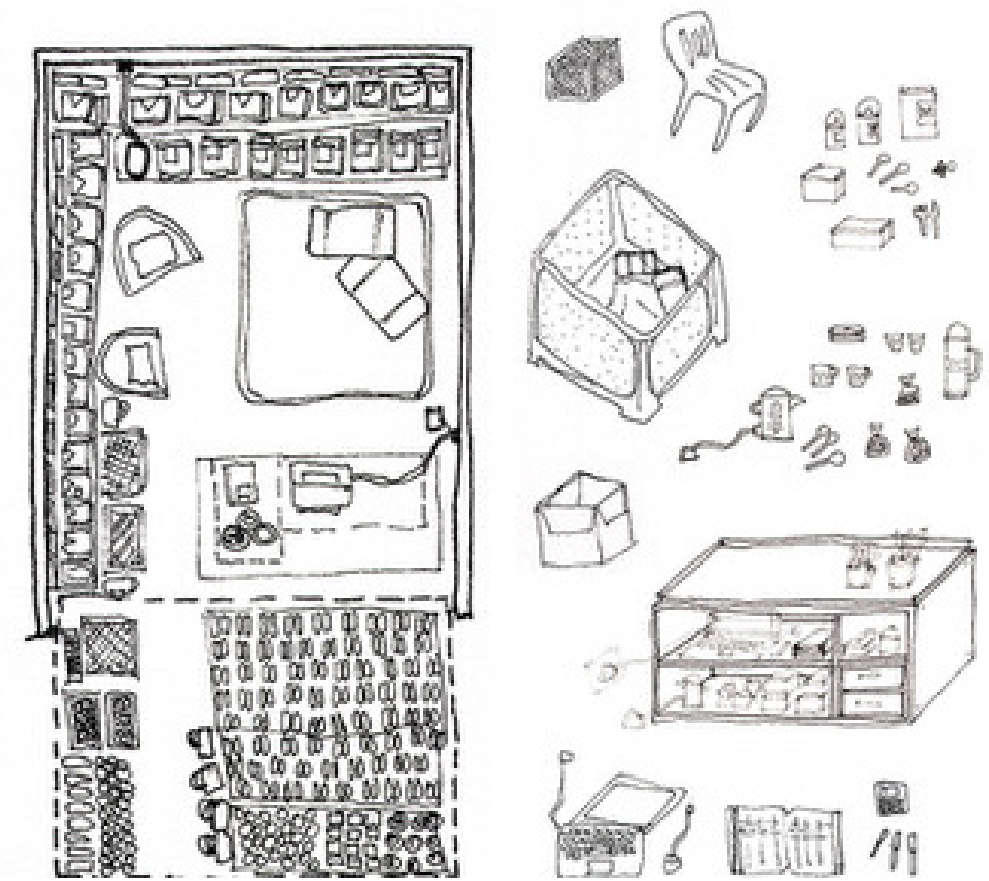
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A Kind of Homeplace. 2016
 Huda Tayob

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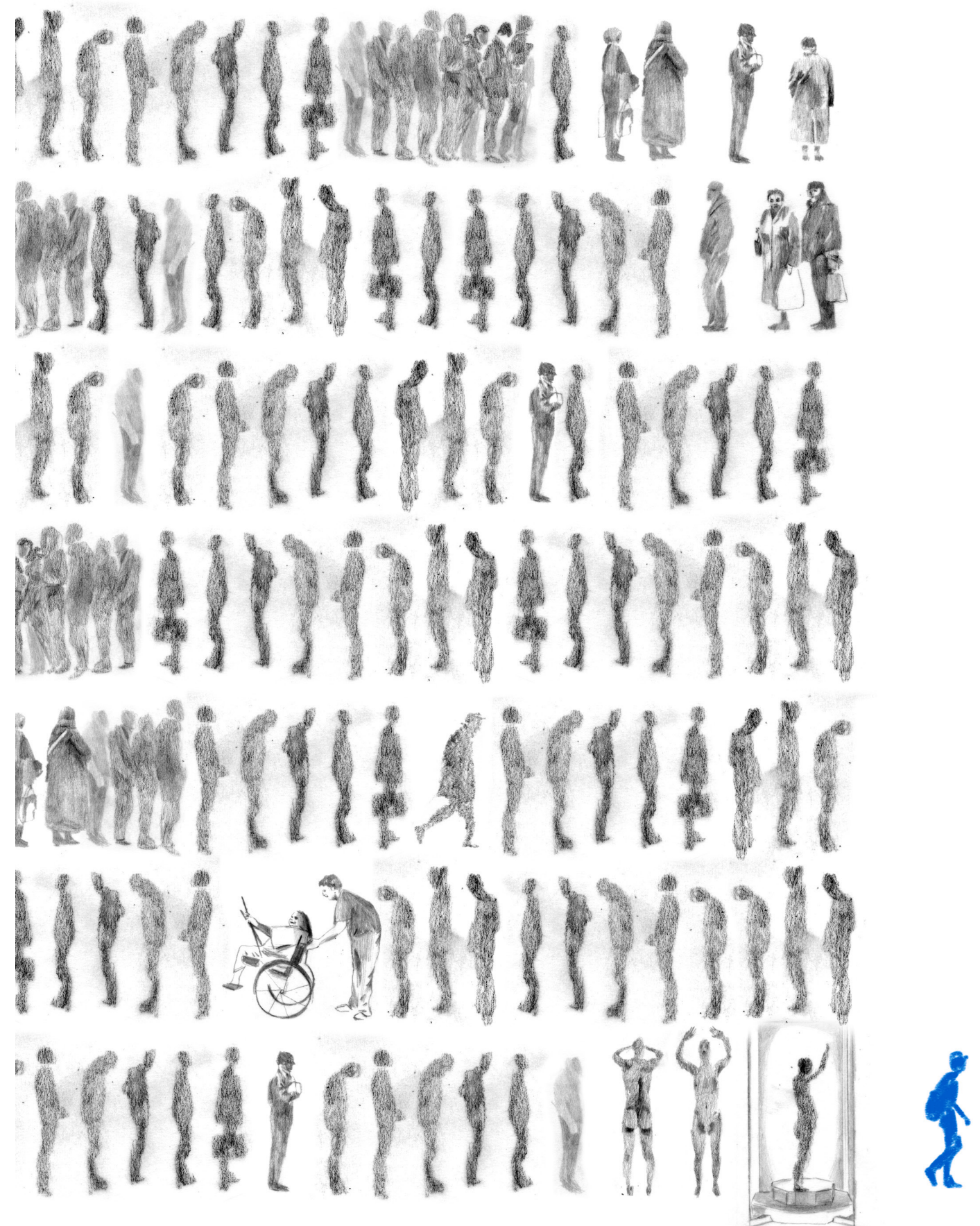
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Projects

Restoring Hostel 33, Lwandle Migrant Labour Museum, Langa:
<http://hostel33.blogspot.com/> (Noëleen Murray and Leslie Witz)



Extracting

**Mining, industrialising, disaccumulating, harbouring, farming, scaling, dumping, off-shoring
factories, ports, plantations, mines, zones of exception, tax havens**

Extracting involves a stripping of assets which results in perpetual displacement of humanity, goods, responsibilities and rights moved 'elsewhere'. Mines, harbours, dumping sites and plantations are some of the spaces where the exploitation of labour and resources reproduce spatial injustices. These connect with and continue earlier colonial forms into new mutations of zones of exception, from off-shore territories and tax havens, to out-sourcing territories and casualised economies. Extracting is centred on the disposability of labour and value, yet is not always reduced to absolute deprivation and degradation.

Port cities are among the socio-material sites of extractive infrastructures to the world beyond; sites marked by the racialisation of labour and ecological harm (Zeiderman; Weate). Yet as suggested by Katherine McKittrick, while a 'black sense of place' is central to practices of domination, it is also constituted by transgression as evident in the everyday life of post-slavery and post-plantation societies. These alternative narratives suggest an analytic of love and resistance (Neale Hurston), 'looking sideways' in the archive for archival silences (Christiansë), and the possibilities inherent in poetics, rumours (Baderoon), drawing (Loewenson) and performing (Koleka). This resistance respond to the extreme violence of displacements. Extracting attends to the extreme violations displaced elsewhere, along with the narratives and practices of resistance and remaking.



The First Supper, The Liberation Carnival Réunion, Unit 12 Graduate School of Architecture UJ. 2017
by Tonia Murray [Unit Leaders: Lesley Lokko, Sumayya Vally]

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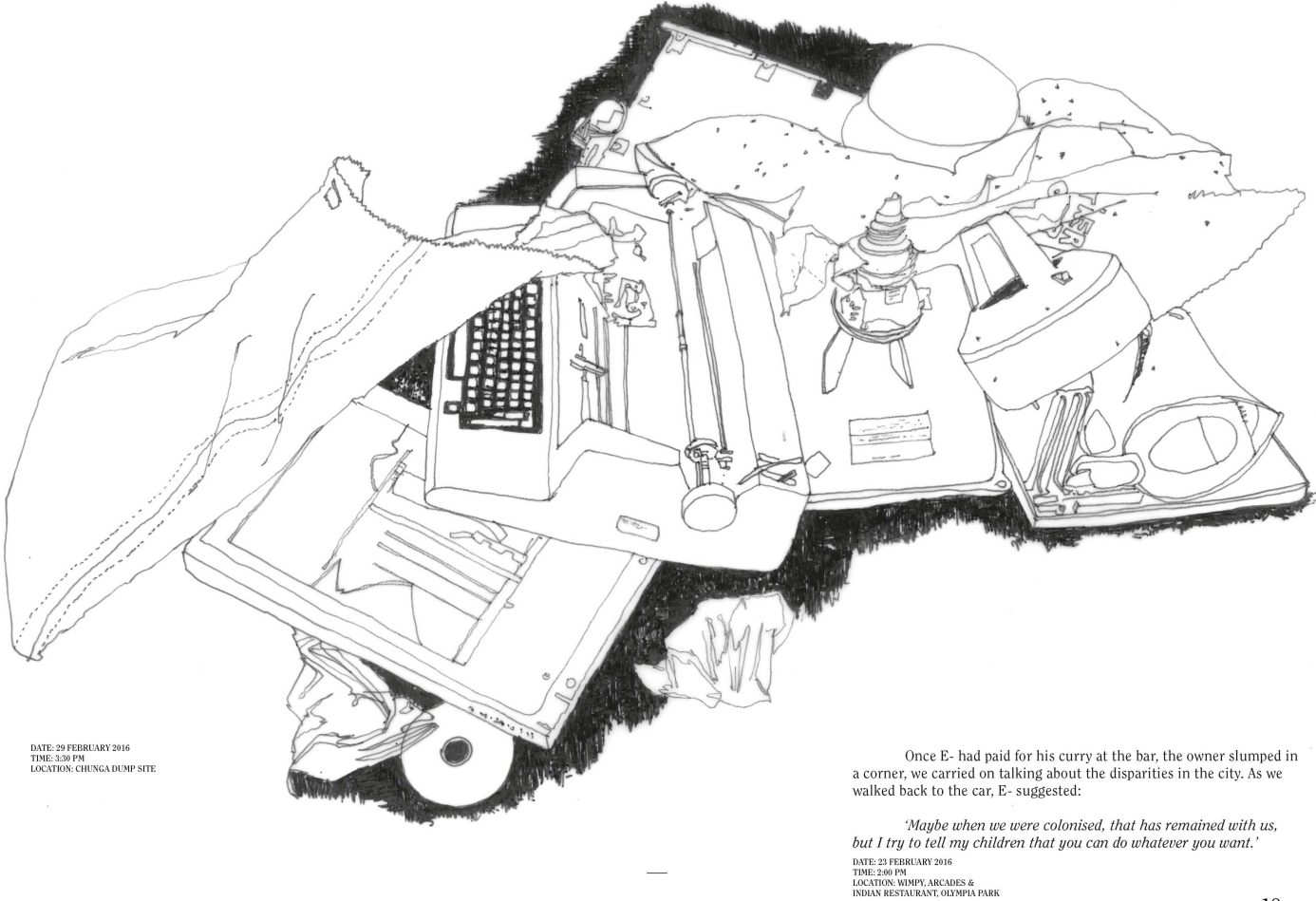
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Immobilising

Illegalising, suspending, patrolling, brokering, trafficking, disinvesting, terrorising, displacing
Borders, partitions, walls, processing offices, waiting rooms, streets

Immobilising captures the central role and technologies of the state in validating and legalising the immobility of racialised bodies. Immobilising is a form of displacement that engages with space and time, where uncertainty and waiting are core to the suspension of citizenship as captured in Nicholas De Genova’s analysis of ‘illegality’. In spatial terms we see how extreme violations against humanity proliferate in a growing architecture of national partitions and borders, where a thinning of citizenship rights is matched with a thickening of bureaucracy. A repertoire of spaces associated with deportation and extradition further reveal how race and religion are brought into racial systems of segregation and a heightened politics of fear (Kapoor).

Immobilising is also evident in the banal spaces of everyday life, from waiting rooms and processing offices ostensibly for public service, highlighted as much in welfare office in Buenos Aires (Auyero) as by the everyday bordering central to immigration ‘control’ in austerity Britain (Yuval-Davis, Wemyss, Cassidy). In these spaces we see the intersection of a politics of austerity and re-emergent racisms. These intersections of political segregation and economic investment that favour select interests are globally evident in structural adjustment programmes and historical marginalisation. The extremity of immobilising processes across liberal democracies also produces alternative imaginaries of politics, solidarity and space.



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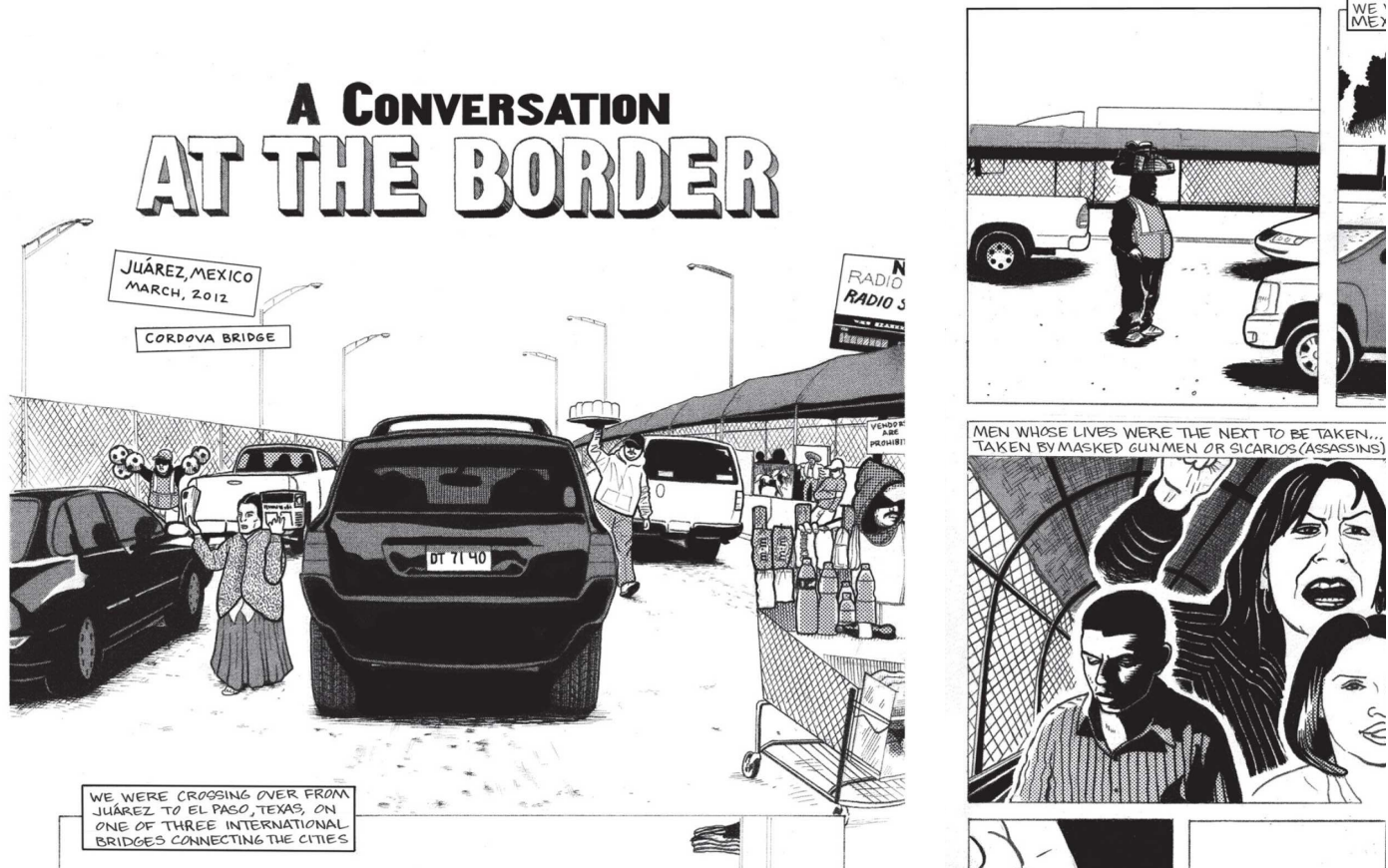
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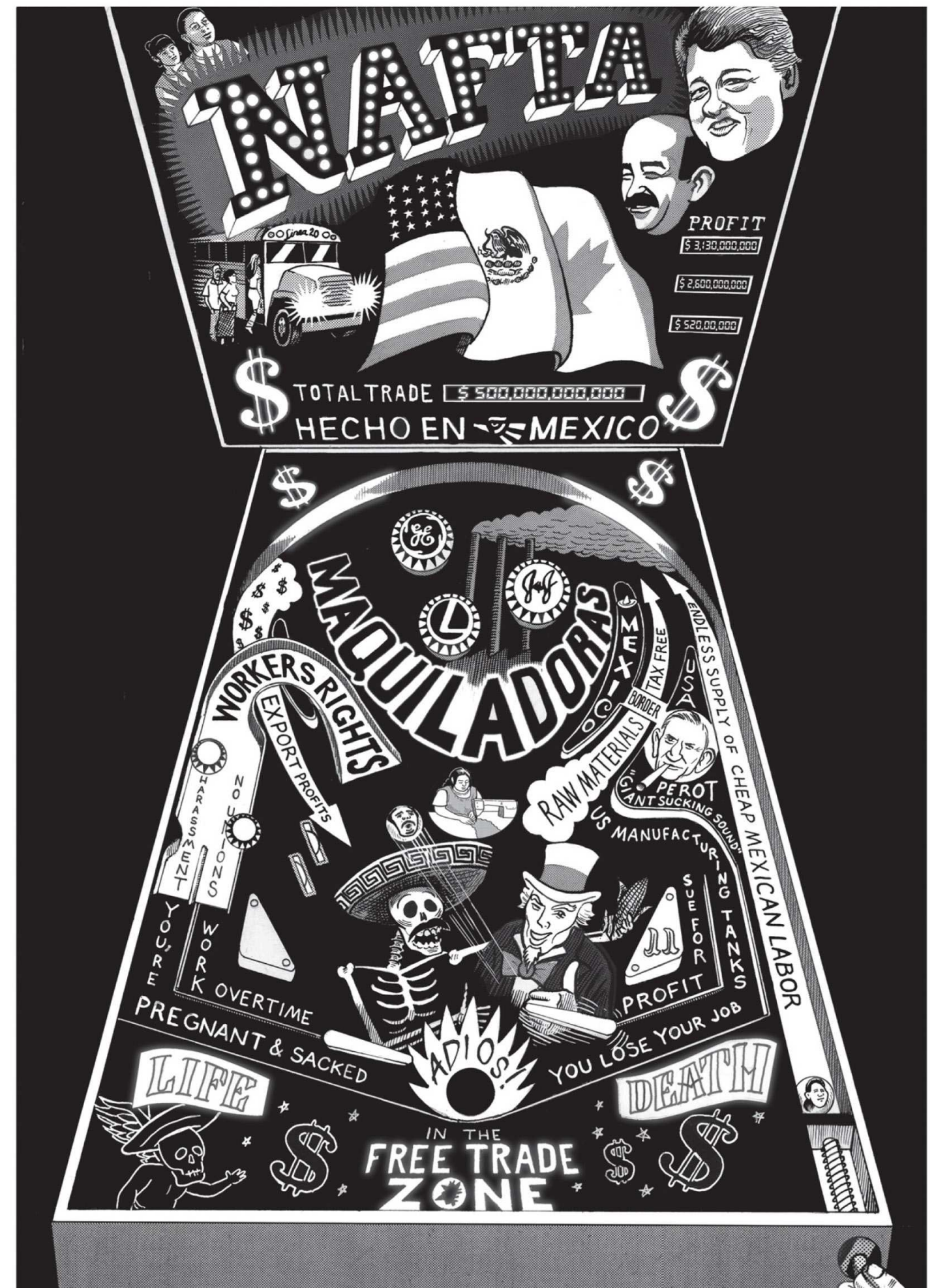
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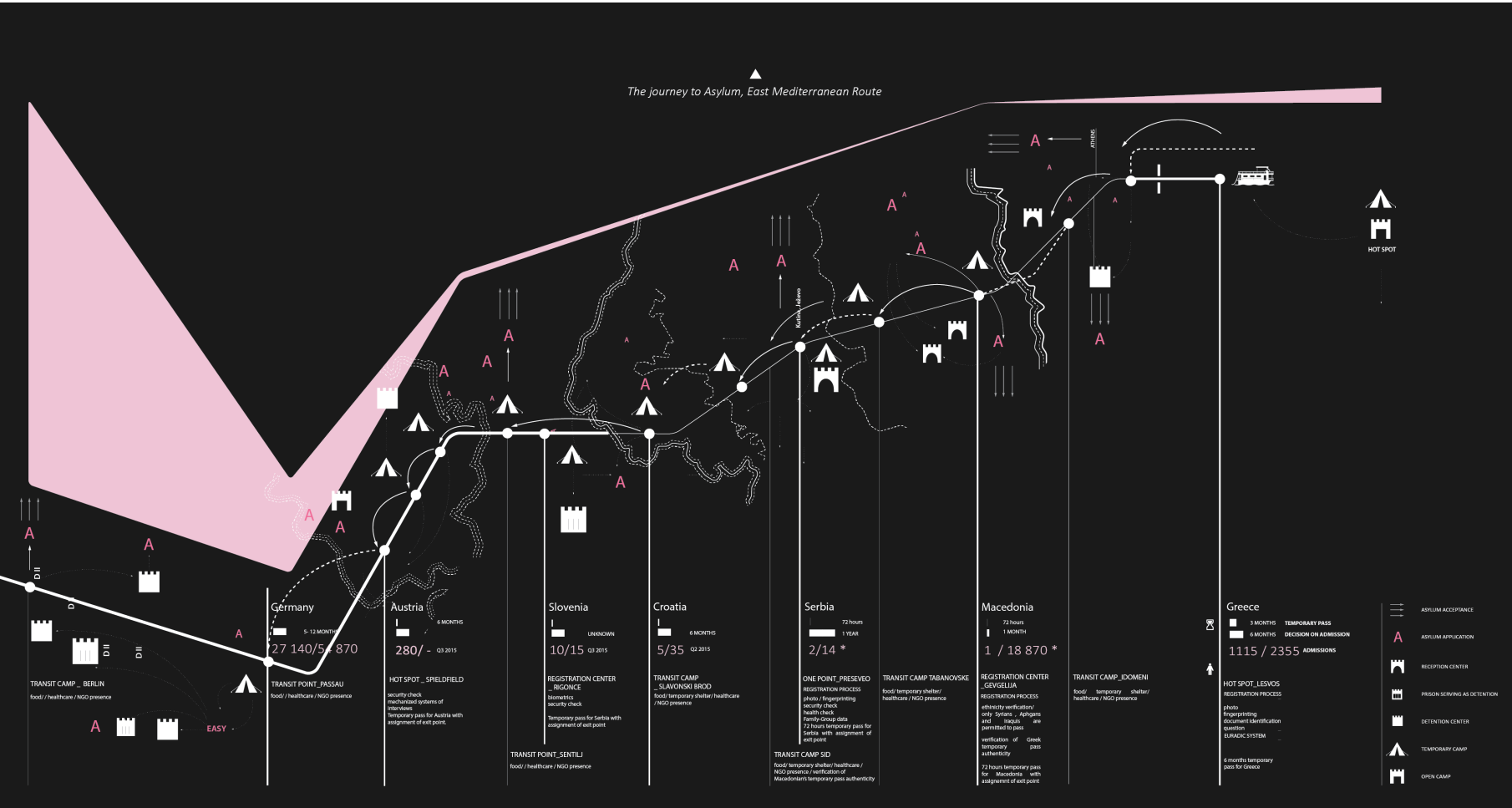


Incarcerating

Imprisoning, detaining, containing, outsourcing, policing, privatising, surveilling, interning
prisons, detention camps, labour camps, private police forces, technologies

Modernity produces the subject as a scientific, categorised, contained and regulated being through technologies of surveillance. Incarcerating involves the scrutiny and punishment of bodies that are rendered as racial, ethnic or religious ‘other’. The typologies extend from detention, displacement and labour camps which utilise forms of walls, fences, checkpoints, security cameras, biometric profiling and data capture technologies, to the everyday routines of racialised stop and search on sidewalks.

For Angela Davis, the incarcerating typology of the prison replaces the plantation as a site for the exploitation of labour, where racial violence and associated uricide continue into the present. While in the pacific, Anoma Pieris explores the genealogy of colonial prisons, similarly questioning forms of racialised citizenship and penal labour. Yet incarcerating practices extend beyond the boundaries of the nation state and particular geographies. Processes of arrest, interrogation and prolonged detention through invisible extra-territorial and proxy detention sites point to a global landscape of incarceration extending from Australia’s “Blacksites” (Morgan and Dharmadasa) to the Middle East and North America with forms mass incarceration that are rendered banal (Khalili). While incarcerating practices are marked by asymmetrical power relationships, these are countered by practices of gendered resistance (Alves). Mine Okubo’s graphic novels on Japanese World War 2 internment camps, and Samar Maqusi’s mapping of Palestinian refugee camps, similarly draw our attention to the everyday spatial transgressions, suggestive of an alternative kind of political space in the making.



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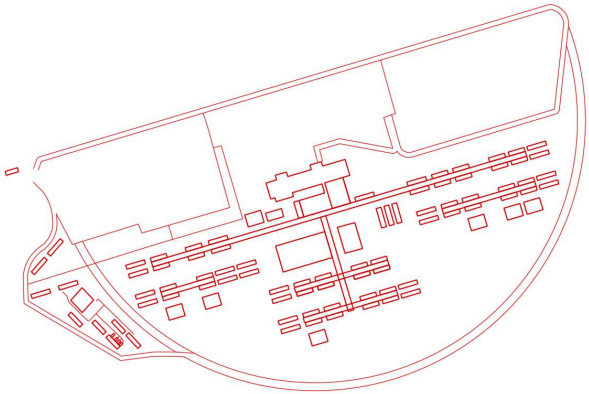
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